Permits for Inter-State Bus Routes

2581. SHRIMATI SATYA BAHIN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal is under Government's consideration to issue permits for inter-state bus routes and permission for plying private buses on these routes; if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether any provision for reservation for the persons belonging to Scheduled Castes has also been made while issuing such permits; if so, the details thereof;

(c) what is the number of such permits issued to the persons belonging to Scheduled Castes out of the total permits issued by the State Transport Authority during the last few days; and

(d) what was the number of applications received for such permits from the reserved category and whether Government propose to invite applications again from the candidates belonging to Scheduled Castes in case allotment has not been made as per the reservation quota ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) No, Sir. It is for the State Governments/Union Territories to issue permits for inter-State bus routes.

(b) to (d) Does not arise in view of answer to (a) above.

Cut on Funds for Maintenance of National Highways in West Bengal

2582. SHRI ASHIS SEN :
SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN :
SHRIMATI SARALA MAHESHWARI :
SHRI MD. SALIM :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

a) whether it is a fact that Government entrust the State Governments the work of maintenance of National Highways and release funds for the purpose;

(b) if so, whether funds are released regularly and adequately;

(c) whether it is a fact that Government have cut down the funds for maintenance of National Highways passing through West Bengal; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Funds for maintenance of National Highways are released to the State Governments periodically keeping in view the requirements and total funds available for the purpose in the budget. Due to constraint of resources, it has not been possible to release full amount of funds for maintenance as per norms to various States including West Bengal.

Private Sector Participation in Development of National Highways

2583. SHRI MOHINDER SINGH LATHER : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have since decided to encourage the private sector participation in the field of construction, maintenance and development of National Highways;

(b) if so, the special incentives envisaged for the purpose and the response from the private sector;

(c) whether Government have also invited the foreign private companies to invest in the construction of roads;

(d) if so, the response from the foreign-investors;

(e) the likely investment, from both the foreign and domestic sources; and

(f) the National Highways/Expressways which are proposed to be handed over to the private sector ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a)